

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claim 10 has been amended by incorporating therein the subject matter of claim 13, and claim 30 has been amended by incorporating therein the subject matter of claim 32. Accordingly, claims 13 and 32 have been canceled, claims 20-22 have been amended to depend on claim 10 instead of claim 13, and claims 39-41 have been amended to depend on claim 30 instead of claim 32.

It is submitted that the amendments do not raise any new issues. Accordingly, entry and consideration of the amendments is respectfully requested.

Claims 10-12, 14-31, and 33-51 are pending in the present application. Claims 10 and 30 are the only independent claims.

In the Office Action, claims 10-11, 12-21, and 25-51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over US 6,654,085 to Koike et al. ("Koike") in view of US 3,763,356 to Berler ("Berler"), and claims 22-24 and 41-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Koike in view of Berler, further in view of US 4,812,034 to Mochizuki ("Mochizuki").

In summary, it is alleged in the Office Action that Berler discloses printing fluorescent ink on an optical readable member for identification purposes, so that it would have been obvious to use the process of Berler "for identifying purposes" (Office Action at page 4), and that the present claims "are to an optical element and does [sic] not exclude the optical elements found in Berler" (Office Action at page 6, lines 9-10).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. Berler does not have an easy-release layer, and in addition, Berler prints its ink on a permanent substrate. Thus, Berler does not provide a motivation to print ink on any cellulose acetate layer, and specifically not

on an easy-release layer.

In other words, there is no suggestion in Berler of any interest or motivation for applying the ink in Berler to an easy-release film, so that Berler does not provide any motivation to apply its ink so as to provide an easy-releasing protective member comprising a portion comprising an ink information for identification and another portion without the ink information, as recited in present claims 10 and 30.

Furthermore, the substrate of Berler is an optically readable document, and Berler is completely silent as to applying its ink on an easy-releasing protective member with respect to an optical element comprising an optical material comprising at least one of a polarizing plate, retardation plate and a brightness enhanced plate, as recited in present claims 10 and 30.

In contrast, in the presently claimed invention, an easy-releasing protective member comprising a portion comprising an ink information for identification and another portion without the ink information is provided on at least one side of front side and back side on an optical material an optical element comprising an optical material comprising at least one of a polarizing plate, retardation plate and a brightness enhanced plate, and the optical transmittance of the portion comprising the ink information is no less than 90% and up to 100% of an optical transmittance of said portion without the ink information, as recited in present claims 10 and 30. As discussed in the previous response, advantages can be obtained by providing the ink information for identification on the protective member with easy peelability, including in particular (i) the possibility of a high-precision inspection for appearance selection while the protective member with identification ink is kept on the optical member, and (ii) the possibility of preventing pollution and damage to an optical material while the protective member with identification ink is

kept on, but also easy peelability from the optical member for use of the optical material, which advantages are particularly appropriate when the optical material comprises optical material comprises at least one of a polarizing plate, retardation plate and a brightness enhanced plate. These features of the presently claimed invention and their advantages are not taught or suggested in Berler, and the other cited references fail to remedy these deficiencies of Berler. Therefore, the present claims are not obvious over the cited references taken alone or in any combination.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections should be withdrawn.

In addition, as discussed in the previous response, with respect to claims 11 and 30, Berler is completely silent as to an optical transmittance of the portion without the identification information in the protective member is no less than 80%, as recited in claims 11 and 30, and the other cited references fail to remedy this deficiency of Berler. Therefore, for this reason alone, present claims 11 and 30, and the claims dependent thereon, are not obvious over the cited combinations of references. With respect to the other dependent claims, the combinations of features are also not taught or suggested in any of the cited references. Therefore, for these respective reasons alone, these claims are not obvious over the cited combinations of references.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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